South Lakefront Corridor Transit Study

Public Meeting ● Monday, September 12, 2011; 5:00PM to 7:30PM ●
Compiled by: Meghan McShan ● Meghan.mcshan@o-hcommunitypartners.com

Meeting Location, Format and Attendance

The Public Meeting was held in the Banquet Hall of Apostolic Church of God, 6320 S. Dorchester Avenue, Chicago. This was the second public meeting held during this study. The meeting began with an Open House at 5:00pm, followed by a presentation at 6:00pm and a second Open House at 7:00pm. Forty four people attended the meeting in addition to the 19 members from the study team and the sponsoring agencies.

Open House Stations

The Open House featured six stations for attendees to meet with the study team representatives and view display boards which provided information about the potential projects that could be implemented within study area. The topics discussed at each station are described below:

- **Station 1 – Potential Project 1: Improvements to Existing CTA Bus Network:** featured projects that could be implemented to improve the CTA bus network in the study area.
- **Station 2 – Potential Project 2: Improvements to Existing CTA Rail Network:** displayed rail station enhancements and other projects that could be implemented to improve CTA rail service within the study area.
- **Station 3 – Potential Project 3: North-South Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) & Streetcar:** presented the project options for new north/south Bus Rapid Transit and streetcar service in the study area.
- **Station 4 – Potential Project 4: East-West Corridor BRT or Enhanced Bus Service:** showed the potential Bus Rapid Transit and Enhanced Bus service for east/west streets in the study area.
- **Station 5 – Potential Project 5: Changes to Metra Electric District (MED) Rail:** revealed the potential changes that could be implemented on the Metra Electric District Line.
- **Station 6 – Transit Oriented Development Assessment**: provided an overview of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and demonstrated the potential TOD improvements that could be implemented within the study area.

Presentation

Attendees were welcomed by Brenda McGruder from the Chicago Department of Transportation. Kim Hunt from O-H Community Partners presented the study's main goals and issues identified by stakeholders. Larry Englisher from Cambridge Systematics walked attendees through the screening process used to select the packages of potential projects and described the potential projects in further detail. At the end of the presentation, the next

steps in the study process were explained and attendees were invited to review the projects on the presentation boards and make comments.

Public Meeting Q&A, Open House and Input Form Comments

At the meeting, there were several opportunities for members of the community to comment on the potential projects selected for additional study: during the question and comment period after the presentation, during the open house, and by filling out comment forms given at the beginning of the meeting. Five written comment forms were received at the close of the meeting. Those comments are incorporated below. The following summarizes all of the comments that were received from the meeting attendees:

Improvements to Existing CTA Bus Network:

- Restore Route X3 (King Drive Express).
- For the King Drive Express, there should be a route that serves just the portion between Chicago Avenue and 39th Street for the following reasons: In the morning the buses are too full when they reach the high density developments north of 39th Street. In the afternoon the buses are too full, partially because many people use the King Drive bus for short trips within the downtown area as it is one of the few southbound buses that start north of the river. Having a short turn at 39th Street would discourage riders destined for further south from boarding, freeing up space on the bus, and would allow the bus to get back downtown quickly for another southbound trip.
- The 83rd street bus should be extended to Simeon High School to accommodate student riders.
- A comment made during the presentation about the 83rd Street route proposal indicated that consideration should not be given, in the transportation planning process, to serving employers that do not support the community by paying fair wages (83rd Street Wal-Mart mentioned specifically).
- The proposed route on 31st Street should go to McCormick Place.
- Service hours on Route 39 Pershing should be expanded to weekends and later in the evening.
- There is a need for better east-west bus service in the vicinity of 30th to 39th Street to access rail stations.
- There was interest in combining the two different bus lines that operate on 51st Street, east and west of the Red Line (#51 and #15). This would allow passengers to make trips across beyond the Red Line without transferring buses.
- The #6 (South Shore Express) should pick up passengers south of 79th Street.

Improvements to Existing CTA Rail Network:

- Past 95th Street there is a lack of transportation. A comment was made asking why the Red Line Extension project was not listed in the presentation. *(The South Lakefront Corridor Study did not include the Red Line extension as a potential project because this proposal is being studied separately and the extension is outside of the study area. The Red Line extension was noted on the Projects Underway slide of the presentation.)*

- From the most southern parts of the study area it takes a long time to travel downtown. Support was expressed for restoring A/B express trains on the Red Line. All stops should be made from 95th to 69th Streets then trains should run skip stop to Cermak.
- Address customer concerns about personal security on the Green Line: e.g., It was suggested by a meeting attendee that while the 63rd Street Green Line station is fairly close to the University of Chicago, students and others associated with the school do not take full advantage of this line due to their negative perceptions of personal security on the Green Line (compared to the Red Line).

North-South Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) & Streetcar:

- An attendee inquired about the plans for the Jeffery BRT project. *(This project is now under development and was noted as such in the Projects Underway slide of the presentation.)*
- An attendee inquired about the prioritization of projects for East/West versus North/South corridors.
- Improvements should be made to the existing N/S infrastructure (i.e., The Red and Green Lines) rather than investing in BRT.

East-West Corridor BRT or Enhanced Bus Service:

- A participant asked if BRT routes proposed for this project were consistent with those recently proposed by the Metropolitan Planning Council.
- There was concern about impacts to cross traffic for the 79th Street Enhanced Bus proposal due to TSP (Transit Signal Priority), particularly on Cottage Grove given the commercial activity in that area.
- An attendee inquired how bike lanes would be accommodated on 55th Street if BRT was built.
- An attendee inquired how BRT would be developed and parking accommodated at the eastern portion of 55th Street where there is less right of way
- There was concern that the 55th Street BRT not affect Midway Plaisance
- Restore route X55 (Garfield Express)

Changes to Metra Electric District (MED) Rail:

- Support was expressed for projects to increase frequency on the MED South Branch.
- Support was expressed for the Gold Line and Gray Line. It was noted that implementation of the Gold Line would be a potential first step in the implementation of components of the Gray Line.
- A suggestion was given to establish a fare integration pilot project in the corridor as part of the RTA initiative on fare integration. The program could test handheld smart card readers on Metra.
- The study scope should include a capacity analysis (simulation) of Metra rail operations that would answer questions about whether the Gold Line could work and how capacity issues could be addressed.

Public Meeting ● Monday, September 12, 2011; 5:00PM to 7:30PM ●
Compiled by: Meghan McShan ● Meghan.mcshan@o-hcommunitypartners.com

Transit Oriented Development Assessment:

- There is a development opportunity at the 95th Street node around the Red Line Station and Metra Electric near Chicago State University.
- There was interest in the area at and south of 95th street, including service that connects areas to the east and the west of the Red Line, including Chicago State University. The transportation in this area is difficult due to the current roadway and bus route system.
- All developments with state/federal/municipal funding should be served by transit.
- The City's lakefront parks should be connected with user-friendly public transportation, bike paths and pedestrian walkways. Natural areas such as the 31st Street, 57th Street and 63rd Street beaches and the South Shore Cultural Center should be included as destination points within this study area.

Public Involvement:

- The 51st Street Business Association and other Chambers of Commerce (e.g. Bronzeville) requested meetings to ensure their plans are considered in/coordinated with the study
- Lakeside Development requested a meeting and that long-term projects be sketched out with dotted lines to help potential tenants/buyers in the development know that transportation to that area is planned.
- More diversity was requested on the study team
- Concern was express that there is no representative of the disabled community on the TAC. *(However, there is a representative from the disabled community on the PAC.)*

Accessibility:

- The real time bus arrival information should be ADA compliant for the blind.
- Visually disabled populations would be concerned about TSP as that would change the signal timing to which people are accustomed as pedestrians. Audible pedestrian signals could be a solution to this.
- It was pointed out that the 87th Red Line station is not ADA accessible.
- ADA accessibility is needed at all stations, especially given the aging population in the area.
- Stations on the MED Blue Island Line between 95th and 75th Streets are not ADA accessible
- An analysis of disabled ridership should be conducted as a part of this study.

Public Meeting ● Monday, September 12, 2011; 5:00PM to 7:30PM ●
Compiled by: Meghan McShan ● Meghan.mcshan@o-hcommunitypartners.com

September 12, 2011 Public Meeting Sign-In Sheet		
Study Team Members	**Public Meeting Attendees**	
Larry Englisher	Mike Payne	Lev Hirschhorn
Audrey Wennnik	Ethelyn Haygood	Natsutsa Mabwa
Ken Kinney	Alicia Muraski	Deborah R. Norwood
Julia Suprock	Robert Daniels	Pam Jones
Jeromie Windsor	Muriel Jackson	Sam Chiller
Jennifer McNeil-Dhadwal	Theresa Fletcher	Tanya English
Kim Hunt	Lee Pratter	Will Tanzman
Brenda McGruder	Linda Thisted	Bonnie Smith
Joe Iacobucci	Gary Ossewaarde	Angela Webb
Ryan Bumb	Sandra Bivens	John Robinson
Mary Kay Christopher	Catherine Kannenberg	Paul Kim
Sharon Jones	David Harrison	Kevin Slaughter
Meghan McShan	Elaine M. Robinson	Richard Gill
Peter Farenwald	Brenna Conway	Pamela A. Harris
David Baumgartner	Melvin Thompson	Danielle Dai
Catherine Kannenburg	Tony Lowery	Yvette LeGrand
Heather Tabbert	Harvey Kahler	Ellie Ali Fox
James Wilson	Eather Bush	Susan Alitto
Tanya Cohn	Kelvin Ho	Sue Purrington
	Tobby Chow	Karl Bradley
	Rev. Booker Vance	Shani Smith
	Jen Blackman	A. Owens